

INCOMING TELEGRAM**Department of State***Internal*~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Classification

Control: 14262

Rec'd: October 22, 1959
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Action

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FROM: Khorramshahr

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 20, October 21, 4 p.m.

GG/N
*GC/E*SENT TEHRAN 104, REPEATED INFORMATION DEPARTMENT 20, LONDON 7,
BAGHDAD 14, BASRA UNNUMBERED.

Reference: EMBTEL 106 to Khorramshahr.

Foreign Office well informed concerning past practice of flags flown in Shatt. While no hard and fast rule existed, in general foreign shipping bound Iranian ports flew Iraqi flag at fore while Iraqi pilot on board and when pilot embarked and ship passed under control Khorramshahr or Abadan Harbor Master, Iranian flag hoisted. Departing Khorramshahr or Abadan for sea Iranian flag lowered Iraqi raised as soon as ship underway. Some ships flew Iranian flag at outerbar while awaiting pilot to indicate port of destination. Occasionally ships bound Iran flew Iranian flag all way up river but they were exceptions to general rule. Prior issuance new directive no one seemed to care much but Iraqi pilots have from time to time ordered Iranian flag lowered and Iraqi hoisted.

Shipping here all agree it is Iran which is trying to impose new rules not Iraq. No one here believes Iran can make new port directives stick because Iranians do not have sufficient number qualified pilots. Further, all river movements must be coordinated from central point in order avoid chaos which could result in serious accidents. One experienced shipping agent believes Iranian control of Shatt would be "major disaster".

Three ships blacklisted so far, two German, Braunfels and one smaller ship. One Spanish SS INCLUNAVAL PRIMERO boarded FAO by three Iraqi soldiers one sargeant when pilot found ship did not have Iraqi Flag. Soldiers still aboard when ship arrived Harthah point anchorage between Abadan and Khorramshahr so
Iranians refused

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CONFIDENTIAL**-2- 20, October 21, 4 p.m. from Khorramshahr**

Iranians refused register ship. When soldiers finally returned Iraq, Iranians found ship did not have Iranian flag either and vessel blacklisted. Vessel now discharging cargo 50 tons tea Basra. No agreed course to be followed by all shipping agents. One, which is Iranian company, will advise masters comply fully with new Khorramshahr port directive. Most foreign agencies will recommend masters follow Basra port rules and if necessary discharge cargo consigned Iran in Basra or Kuwait. They expect resulting pressure from Iranian importers will call Iranian Government's bluff. Some hope move ships in river at night in attempt avoid flag issue but obvious limit such dodge.

BOWIE**JAK:TR/8****Note: See Tehran's 807 to Department 10/19/59**